



## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

October 23, 1998

### **S. 2094**

### **Fish and Wildlife Revenue Enhancement Act of 1998**

*As cleared by the Congress on October 9, 1998*

S. 2094 would allow the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior to spend, without further appropriation, any offsetting receipts earned from the sale of certain items forfeited or abandoned to the United States under laws such as the Endangered Species Act and the Lacey Act. The agencies that administer these laws—the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)—could use the receipts to pay for costs of storing forfeited and abandoned goods, shipping them to and from storage facilities, selling or otherwise disposing of them, and other related activities.

Under current law, the USFWS and the NMFS may already sell both forfeited and abandoned items but may only retain and spend the receipts from forfeited goods. Receipts derived from abandoned goods are deposited into the general fund of the Treasury, from which they must be appropriated to be spent. As a consequence, the agencies rarely sell abandoned items. By allowing the agencies to retain and spend the proceeds from sales of both types of items, S. 2094 would provide the incentive and means to auction off both the existing inventory of goods and those collected in the future.

CBO estimates that the USFWS would raise additional offsetting receipts of about \$1 million in 1999 from selling the existing inventory of abandoned goods. We estimate that future agency sales (once the existing backlog has been disposed of) would bring in about one-tenth of this amount annually. The effect on NMFS receipts and spending would be much smaller because that agency does not generally seize or keep the types of abandoned goods that could be sold under this legislation. Because any new offsetting receipts collected in any year would be offset by new direct spending, CBO estimates that the net budgetary effect of this act would be negligible in each fiscal year.

The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.